A consignment of 930 rounds out of 15,000 rounds of 130mm ammunition supplied under one of these contracts was found to be affected by sea water during inspection in June 2000 and has been declared unserviceable for which a claim is being raised. The estimated value of the unserviceable ammunition is Rs. 0.85 crores.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Private participation in Coal Mining

311. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning any comprehensive reforms to encourage private participation in coal mining;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have undertaken a 'Regulatory Framework Review Projects' with the help of the World Bank;

(d) if so, the outcome of the review; and

(e) the action proposed to be taken thereon;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 which has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 24.4.2000 seeks to amend the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 for the following purposes:—

(i) To allow the Indian companies to mine coal and lignite without the existing restriction of captive consumption.

(ii) To engage the Indian companies in exploration of coal and lignite resources in the country.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The Project "Review of Regulatory Framework of Coal Industry in India" was undertaken with the credit from International Development Association of the World Bank with the following objectives:—

(i) review the mining, environmental and labour laws, regulations and control systems under which the Indian coal industry operates;

(ii) review the mining, environmental and labour laws and regulations governing mining operations in major coal producing countries; and

(iii) recommend improvements to regulatory framework for coal mining in India.

The final report submitted by the Consultant under the project has several recommendations suggesting various reforms in the Indian coal sector. Ministry of Coal has prepared a Time Bound Action Plant for implementing the feasible recommendations in the report. Implementation of the Action Plan will call for wideranging reforms in many mineral, industrial, labour and environmental laws and procedures.

Expenditure on R&D by Coal Companies

312. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent by various coal companies on Research and Development during the last three years;

(b) the specific R&D work launched by Mahanadi Coal Fields (MCL) during these years; and

(c) the details of the R&D programme drawn up by MCL for the Ninth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) the details of amount spent by various coal companies on Research and Development during last three years are given below:

(i) From S&T fund (Disbursement of fund) from Ministry of Coal.

(*Rs. in lakhs*)

Company	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
ECL	—	—	24.00
BCCL	2.73	—	—
CCL	—	—	1.00
WCL	—	4.75	37.00
SECL	—	84.73	15.11
NCL	4.64	0.63	—
NEC	7.57	—	—
CMPDIL	90.06	267.54	71.20
CIL	105.00	357.65	148.31